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BIG FARM JOB FOR 1946

American farmers have official approval for planning another year of production near wartime levels. Secretary of Agriculture Clinton P. Anderson has suggested national farm production goals totaling over 356 million acres--about 5-1/2 million acres more than indicated plantings for 1945.

Final goals will be announced after recommendations are received from the States. In forwarding the goals for consideration at meetings of State USDA Councils and agricultural leaders, the Secretary emphasized the continuing need for American food.

Pointing out the necessity for helping agriculture convert to a peacetime basis, Secretary Anderson said: "The 1946 goals indicate a pattern of production providing continued high output of those commodities for which wartime demand is continuing and shifts toward peacetime levels for others. Recognition is given to the need for restoring a better balance between soil-depleting and soil-conserving crops."

The largest percentage increase in goal acreages is suggested for sugar beets--31 percent over last year's. Goals for feed grains, including corn, barley, oats, and grain sorghums, are also at or slightly above 1945 indications. Recommended production of 120.5 billion pounds of milk is the same as last year's goal. The recommended goal for eggs produced in 1946 is 85 percent of the number produced in 1945.

The suggested beef cattle goal calls for a slight reduction. The sheep and lamb population, the Department of Agriculture believes, should be kept at present levels.

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MORE CONSERVATION IS IMPORTANT GOAL

Much more work is needed to conserve the Nation's soil, water, and forest resources, Secretary of Agriculture Anderson advises farmers, pointing out that full-scale conservation of our natural farming resources is a fundamental goal in building a better American agriculture.

"We made a good start before the war but in view of the war need for food we had to consider the soil as expendable, and farmers had to use their land in dangerous ways," he said. "Now we have to catch up with the ground we have lost and get conservation going on a scale that is commensurate with the damage being done. So far we must admit that our efforts have been too little and too late."

SUGGESTIONS BY USDA ON PROTEIN PROBLEMS

Voluntary control of the amount of protein going into feeds is the core of a plan presented to livestock and poultry feed mixers. Purpose of the plan is to improve the distribution of limited supplies. With protein short, a scramble for limited amounts has resulted in some feeders getting more than their share and some less.

The USDA has proposed that (1) feed mixers voluntarily limit their use of protein for December, January, and February to the same amount they used in these three months last year; (2) feed mixers, on a voluntary basis, hold their tonnage of poultry feed to that made in the same months a year ago. Such action would assure a more equitable distribution of limited supplies of protein, as well as check the diversion of protein from dairy to poultry feed.

FARM PRICES MOVE HIGHER

As of November 15, prices received by farmers for all groups of farm products were 105 percent above the 1909-14 average, the USDA reports. This compares with 96 percent above the average a year ago, and is higher than at any time since August, 1920, except in June and July of this year, when the level was one percent more.

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The general level of prices paid by farmers for all commodities held steady at 82 percent above the 1910-14 average, five points higher than a year ago. Prices of most major farm commodities were above parity in mid-November, and will probably stay near present levels for the next few months. They mayaverage moderately lower in 1946.

SECRETARY LISTS DAIRY PROBLEMS

Postwar planning of dairy producers must take into account five important facts, according to Secretary of Agriculture Anderson, who operates a New Mexico dairy farm.

They are (1) milk production has expanded from 105 billion pounds in 1941 to 123 billion pounds in 1945; (2) consumers in 1946 are expected to possess the biggest peacetime purchasing power they have ever had; (3) the war stimulated greatly increased production of evaporated milk, dry whole milk, and cheese, so bigger domestic markets are needed for these products; (4) both dairy subsidies and price ceilings will be removed sometime in the future, and the industry will face price adjustments; (5) there's need for increased efficiency in dairy operations.

LOWER EGG PRICES EXPECTED FOR 1946

Egg production during the first half of 1946 is expected to be about the same as the first half of 1945.

Unless exports equal the quantity exported last year under lend-lease, sharp price declines are expected to take place with prices received by farmers going near support levels. Civilian demand for eggs in 1946 will be lower than in 1945, when meat supplies were short.

DEMAND OUTLOOK TO REMAIN HIGH

Demand for farm products is likely to be maintained near its present high level through the winter, although there may be some decline later in 1946, the

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USDA's latest study indicates. Civilian demand, which exceeded supplies of many farm products during much of 1945, may decline slightly in 1946 because of lower incomes.

Total consumer expenditures for farm products are not likely to decline significantly in the early part of 1946, in spite of a somewhat lower national income. Exports of farm products are expected to be considerably lower than during the war.

FARM NEWS SHORTS

Farm egg production in 1946 is expected to be slightly below the near record 1945 output of about 56 billion eggs. Egg production in 1945 was about 40 percent above 1940--about 1/3 of the increase resulting from gains in the rate of lay.

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Supplies of high protein feeds for 1945-46 are expected to be slightly smaller than in 1944-45, both in total volume and per-animal units on farms. Because of some easing of the labor situation and increased crushing facilities, there may be more than the seasonal proportion of the supply of protein meal manufactured during the next few months.

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